

## UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

JUN 17 2021

for the

Western District of Virginia

JULIA C. DUDLEY, CLERK  
BY: *A. Rust*  
DEPUTY CLERK

In the Matter of the Search of )  
 (Briefly describe the property to be searched )  
 or identify the person by name and address )  
 280 Melrose Street )  
 Abingdon, Virginia )  
 )

Case No. 1:21-mj-93

**APPLICATION FOR A SEARCH WARRANT**

I, a federal law enforcement officer or an attorney for the government, request a search warrant and state under penalty of perjury that I have reason to believe that there is now concealed on the following person or property located in the Western District of Virginia (*identify the person or describe property to be searched and give its location*): 280 Melrose Street, Abingdon, Virginia - to include the residence, curtilage, garages, outbuildings, campers, persons present, and vehicles present. Attachment A consists of a photograph of the residence.

The person or property to be searched, described above, is believed to conceal (*identify the person or describe the property to be seized*): See Attachment B

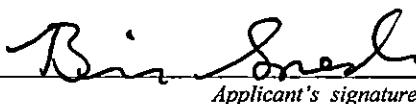
The basis for the search under Fed. R. Crim. P. 41(c) is (*check one or more*):

- evidence of a crime;
- contraband, fruits of crime, or other items illegally possessed;
- property designed for use, intended for use, or used in committing a crime;
- a person to be arrested or a person who is unlawfully restrained.

The search is related to a violation of 21 U.S.C. § 846/841(a)(1), and the application is based on these facts: See Attachment C and/or 841(a)(1)

Continued on the attached sheet.

Delayed notice of    days (give exact ending date if more than 30 days:                     ) is requested under 18 U.S.C. § 3103a, the basis of which is set forth on the attached sheet.



Applicant's signature

Brian Snedeker, Special Agent

Printed name and title

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.

Date: 6/17/21

City and state: Abingdon, Virginia



Pamela Meade Sargent, USMJ

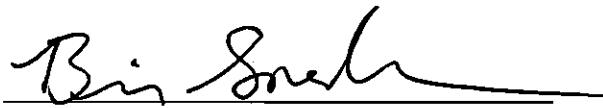
Printed name and title

ATTACHMENT C

AFFIDAVIT of  
Special Agent Brian Snedeker  
Drug Enforcement Administration  
Bristol, Virginia

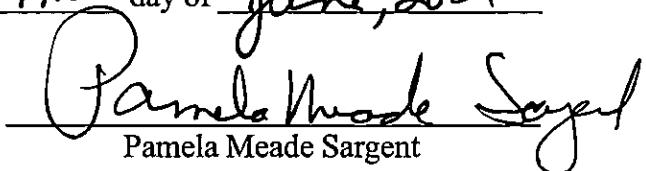
1. I, Special Agent Brian Snedeker, being duly sworn hereby depose and say:
2. The purpose of this application and affidavit is to secure a search warrant for methamphetamine distribution/conspiracy related documentary evidence and equipment/supplies on the premises known as as 280 Melrose Street, Abingdon, Virginia. This affiant, after obtaining and reviewing information, believes there is evidence of distribution of methamphetamine and/or conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine at 280 Melrose Street, Abingdon, Virginia in violation of 21 USC 841(a)(1) and 846/841(a)(1).
3. I am a Special Agent with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and have been so employed for approximately (30) years. During my employment I have received comprehensive classroom training from the DEA in specialized narcotic investigative matters including but not limited to drug interdiction, drug detection, money laundering techniques and schemes, smuggling, and the investigation of individuals and organizations involving the smuggling, cultivation, manufacturing, and illicit trafficking of controlled substances and controlled substance precursors. I have participated in the investigations and subsequent arrests of hundreds of individuals involved with the trafficking of methamphetamine (a Schedule II controlled substance). I have also executed hundreds of search warrants related to the trafficking and manufacturing of methamphetamine.
4. The facts set forth in this affidavit are known to me as a result of my participation in the investigation of Ralph Phillips Jr. (hereafter referred to as "Ralph Phillips), my training and experience, and information provided to me by other law enforcement officers. Any reference to the gender of any unnamed person within this affidavit does not necessarily reflect the true gender of said person.
5. Between April 15, 2021 and June 14, 2021, a confidential source (hereafter referred to as "CS") performed multiple (more than two) controlled purchases (monitored, recorded, and surveilled by law enforcement) of ounce to multi-ounce quantities of methamphetamine from Ralph Phillips within Washington County, Virginia (at Ralph Phillips' county of residence; located within the Western District of Virginia). The most recent controlled purchase of methamphetamine from Ralph Phillips occurred within the last (15) days and took place at Ralph Phillips' known residence located at 280 Melrose Street, Abingdon, Virginia. Following the most recent controlled purchase of methamphetamine from Ralph Phillips, the CS advised law enforcement that Ralph Phillips told her that he obtains the methamphetamine he sells by travelling to a methamphetamine source of supply located outside of Washington County, Virginia. The CS's claim regarding Ralph Phillips' statement was subsequently verified by law enforcement upon a review of the electronic recording of the controlled purchase.

6. Law enforcement has observed (via physical and/or electronic surveillance) Bennett Hamby at Ralph Phillip's residence during April, May, and June of 2021. A review of Bennett Hamby's criminal history revealed his 2016 federal felony conviction for Conspiracy to Possess with Intent to Distribute Crystal Methamphetamine.
6. A review of Ralph Phillips' criminal history revealed his 2015 felony conviction in Virginia for possession of methamphetamine.
7. This affiant is aware based on his training, experience, and conversations with other law enforcement officers that individuals who distribute and/or conspire to distribute methamphetamine typically maintain methamphetamine, methamphetamine distribution paraphernalia (small, plastic, Ziploc-type baggies, digital scales, etc.), notes, records, messages, and telephone numbers (pertaining to methamphetamine trafficking related contacts/co-conspirators/customers), and other items as listed and explained on Attachment B (of the Application and Affidavit for Search Warrant to which this affidavit is attached) on their persons, inside their residences (and related garages, outbuildings/barns, campers), inside their vehicles, and inside of vehicles registered to other persons when those vehicles are parked at the trafficker's/conspirator's residence.
8. This affiant is aware based on his training, experience, and conversations with other law enforcement officers that persons who distribute and/or conspire to distribute methamphetamine routinely have individuals who are customers and/or co-conspirators present at their residences and related, garages, outbuildings/barns, and campers. These customers/co-conspirators are typically drug users and drug traffickers themselves as they generally sell some (if not all) of the methamphetamine they purchase in order to make a profit, pay for their own drug habits, or both. These customers/co-conspirators often illegally possess methamphetamine and drug use paraphernalia along with notes, records, messages, and telephone numbers (pertaining to the acquisition/distribution of methamphetamine), and other items as listed and explained on Attachment B (of the Application and Affidavit for Search Warrant to which this affidavit is attached) on their persons and in their vehicles (or the vehicles they operate) which are oftentimes parked at the methamphetamine source's/co-conspirator's residence.
9. Ralph Phillips' known residence is 280 Melrose Street, Abingdon, Virginia.
10. Based upon the facts set forth above, I believe there is probable cause for the issuance of a search warrant for the premises known as 280 Melrose Street, Abingdon, Virginia (located within the Western District of Virginia) as there is probable cause to believe that there is evidence of a violation of 21 USC 841(a)(1) and 846/841(a)(1) at said premises.

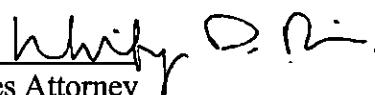
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Brian Snedeker, Special Agent (DEA)

6-17-2021  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Subscribed and sworn to before me, this the 17<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2021  
in Abingdon, Virginia.

  
Pamela Meade Sargent  
United States Magistrate Judge  
Western District of Virginia

Reviewed by:

s/ Whitney D. Pierce  6/17/2021  
Whitney D. Pierce  
Assistant United States Attorney 06-16-2021  
Date